

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA/IAI:MR. STACKHOUSE:ARA:MR. BOWDLER

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

ARA:MR. KUBISCH

NEA:MR. SOBER (SUBSTANCE)

S/S - MR. FRY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 119127

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS:PFOR, VE, XM

SUBJ:LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY TO VENEZUELAN FOREIGN
MINISTER SCHACHT

1. PLEASE PASS THE FOLLOWING LETTER FROM SECRETARY
KISSINGER TO FOREIGN MINISTER SCHACHT AT THE EARLIEST
POSSIBLE TIME:
2. BEGIN TEXT: DEAR MR. MINISTER: I HAVE JUST RETURNED
FROM THE MIDDLE EAST TO FIND YOUR LETTER OF MAY 15 AWAITING
ME. PLEASE CONVEY MY APPRECIATION TO PRESIDENT CARLOS
ANDRES PEREZ FOR HIS KIND INVITATION TO NANCY AND ME TO
VISIT VENEZUELA. YOU MAY ALSO INFORM HIM, AS I MENTIONED
TO YOU IN WASHINGTON, THAT I HOPE TO HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY
TO VISIT VENEZUELA AND OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES
BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR.
3. BECAUSE I KNOW THAT YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT FOLLOW
MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE
INTERESTED IN AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL
AND SYRIA.

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4. IT WAS CLEAR AFTER THE EGYPT-ISRAEL DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED JANUARY 18 THAT A SIMILAR STEP WITH RESPECT TO SYRIA AND ISRAEL WOULD BE NECESSARY IF THE

MOMENTUM TOWARD PEACE THAT WAS BEING GATHERED WAS NOT TO BE LOST. HAPPILY, BOTH SYRIA AND ISRAEL EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SUCH AN AGREEMENT AND IN UTILIZING AMERICAN GOOD OFFICES TO ACHIEVE IT.

5. WE KNEW THAT THIS WOULD BE A DIFFICULT NEGOTIATION, AND IT WAS INDEED ARDUOUS. THE POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES WERE FAR APART INITIALLY AND IT WAS ONLY THROUGH THE MOST PAINSTAKING EFFORT THAT THE GAP BETWEEN THEM WAS CLOSED. BUT, I WANT TO STRESS, HOWEVER TENACIOUSLY THE TWO SIDES ADVANCED THEIR POSITIONS, I WAS ALWAYS CONVINCED OF THEIR GOOD FAITH AND SERIOUSNESS OF INTENT. THE DEPLORABLE EVENTS OF MAALOT AND SUBSEQUENT ISRAELI ACTIONS AGAINST TARGETS IN LEBANON DID NOT DIVERT THEM FROM THEIR GOAL. BOTH SIDES CLEARLY WANTED THIS AGREEMENT AND WOULD NOT BE TURNED AWAY FROM IT BY A CHAIN OF EVENTS INSTIGATED BY EXTRA-GOVERNMENTAL ELEMENTS. I BELIEVE THIS CAN BE A GOOD AUGURY FOR THE WHOLE PEACE PROCESS.

6. THE AGREEMENT ITSELF IS WELL DESIGNED TO ACCOMPLISH ITS MAIN PURPOSES. THE CEASE-FIRE IS TO BE SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVED FROM THE DATE OF ITS SIGNING. THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE TWO SIDES WILL BE SEPARATED BY A BUFFER ZONE AND THE LEVELS OF THEIR ARMAMENTS WILL BE LIMITED ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS ZONE. A UNITED NATIONS FORCE WILL BE EMPLACED TO INSPECT COMPLIANCE. PRISONERS OF WAR AND THE BODIES OF THE DEAD WILL BE EXCHANGED. IN BRIEF, ALL THE PAINFUL, VEXING ELEMENTS EXISTING IN THE SYRIAN-ISRAELI CONFRONTATION THAT HAVE PRODUCED AND PERPETUATED A BLOODY WAR OF ATTRITION IN RECENT MONTHS WILL BE REMOVED OR NEUTRALIZED.

7. WE MUST, OF COURSE, RECOGNIZE REALISTICALLY WHAT THIS AGREEMENT IS NOT, IT IS NOT A PEACE AGREEMENT, AS ITS FINAL PARAGRAPH STATES; IT IS A STEP TOWARD A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE ON THE BASIS OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION
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338 OF OCTOBER 22, 1973. THE BASIC ISSUES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SYRIA REMAIN, AND IF THIS NEGOTIATION IS ANY INDICATION, THEIR RESOLUTION WILL BE DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX.

8. BUT I BELIEVE WE MAY BE PERMITTED REAL HOPE FOR THE FUTURE BY WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. AS PRESIDENT NIXON HAS SAID, A MAJOR ROADBLOCK TO A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT HAS BEEN REMOVED. WE CONSIDER THIS AGREEMENT TO BE A PIVOTAL

ONE. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1949, SYRIA HAS MADE AN AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL; THIS CANNOT FAIL TO HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON OTHER ARAB STATES WHO HAVE RESISTED ANY COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS OF SEEKING PEACE

THROUGH NEGOTIATION. FOR ARAB STATES ALREADY EMBARKED ON THIS COURSE THE AGREEMENT CAN ONLY REINFORCE THEIR COMMITMENT. FOR ISRAEL, THE AGREEMENT MEANS A SURCEASE, IN WHICH ITS OWN THINKING ABOUT THE SHAPE OF ITS FUTURE RELATIONS WITH ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS CAN FURTHER EVOLVE.

9. THE SYRIA-ISRAEL DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT IS AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN A STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS. A FOUNDATION IS NOW ESTABLISHED WITHIN WHICH THE SHOOTING CAN STOP AND PREPARATIONS CAN BEGIN FOR CONSIDERING THOSE BASIC ISSUES THAT WILL BE INVOLVED IN A PEACE AGREEMENT.

10. IN A FEW DAYS VENEZUELA WILL BE HOSTING THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE. I CANNOT EMPHASIZE TOO STRONGLY THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS MEETING TO ALL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. I WILL BE FOLLOWING THE DELIBERATIONS CLOSELY AND I HOPE THAT THE OUTCOME WILL BE A LAND-MARK IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THIS FIELD.

11. WARM REGARDS, HENRY A. KISSINGER. END TEXT. GDS KISSINGER

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